

Jesus sends the twelve: to heal the sick 21/7/07

Luke 9:1-6

Healing the sick – something just for the New Testament or for us too? The bible talks about healing as something we should do as we share the message of salvation as it demonstrates it is true.

Hebrews 2: 3-4. *This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord was confirmed to us by those who heard him. God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to His will*

Acts 3: 1:16 - some principles from this example of healing

1. Taking the initiative (verse 1-5)

Each healing starts with a step – either from us, from the person who is sick or sometimes from God. Stepping out and offering healing to someone is a challenge and scary but if we step out, he comes.

The bible accounts show that Jesus frequently met people who were ill, and his response was to heal them. He did it out of compassion, to glorify God and because he saw sickness as an enemy to be defeated. He never said to anyone - stay sick for a while it will do you good, you will learn something from it, or God wants you to remain sick.

God is calling us to step out and take the initiative – when people are sick let's ask God to heal them.

2. Dependence upon God (verse 6-8)

Peter took the initiative because of his faith in God. He had placed his dependence in God and was fully submitted to what God wanted.

Later on Peter explains what was happening – He says it was by faith in the name of Jesus. (verses 11-16) Peter stepped out and believed and God responded to the faith and healed. The faith came through Jesus to start with – Peter was responding to what Jesus had done in him.

It can also be the faith of the person who is sick e.g. woman with issue of blood that touched Jesus (Luke 9:20-22)

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3. Healing verifies the salvation message (verse 9- 16)

This healing prompted a sharing of the gospel and people being saved. People are astonished at what happened - they want to know both how and by who this was done.

Acts 4:4 shows how effective this was - the church grew from 3000 to 5000 because of this event.

4. It's not like the old days when everyone got healed...

It may come as a surprise, but not everyone was healed in Acts or even when Jesus was around – it was not a 100% success rate. In some places Jesus could not do any healing, (Mark 6:5) and we also see people being prevented from going on mission because they are ill (Trophimus left behind sick in 2Tim 4:20) The disciples did not have a 100% success rate after they were sent out they had a problem with one demonised boy (Matt 17:20-21)

Sometimes a lack of faith as in Nazareth or in the case of the disciples a lack of faith and prayer and fasting is cited as the reason why healing does not take place. But this does not mean we should play the blame game, it is not helpful to say to people you have not been healed because you lacked faith.

We still live in a fallen world and the perfect has not yet come (1Cor 13:10) and unless Jesus returns in our lifetime we all have to die sooner or later!

But this fact did not stop anyone in Acts or Jesus, stepping out in faith to heal.

Summing up

This is one of the big faith challenges that face us as we seek to build a community full of God in Aylesbury.

Our aim is to build a church which simply reflects what is said and experienced in the bible, a church that impacts Aylesbury and beyond, a church that reaches those who don't go to church, and grows through people being saved...Healing is a big key to that happening.